



George
LeMieux
U.S. Senator *for* Florida

E- NEWSLETTER

April 20, 2010

It is an honor and a privilege to serve as your United States Senator. Thank you for subscribing to my weekly update - a brief summary of some of the more notable events during the last seven days. I hope you'll find this useful and informative. You can also follow my regular updates from Florida and Washington via [You Tube](#) , [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)



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Keeping Our Nation Safe

In South Florida this weekend, I talked with a number of Floridians about health care, the national debt, financial regulatory reform, and what we can do to restrain the growth of government. I also had the opportunity to visit with officers at Naval Air Station Key West for an update on their mission.

NAS Key West is the premier training station for air-to-air combat. New technology has given our pilots advanced training capabilities. This helps to improve their ability to defend our nation more effectively. As the ranking Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee's Emerging Threats subcommittee, I am proud of the work our men and women are doing to defend our freedom and keep our nation safe.

Upcoming Jobs Events

During these difficult economic times, I am committed to providing as many resources as possible to help Floridians get back on their feet. Our office recently hosted a successful job fair in the Panhandle where 63 employers and over 700 job seekers attended. In addition, the office sponsored a virtual job fair for the Orlando region where an estimated 400 to 500 positions were filled. These job fairs have successfully put Floridians in touch with employers, as well as existing programs and groups dedicated to helping job seekers. Upcoming job events include:

[Job News Diversity Job Fair](#) - Thursday, April 22, 2010

[Southwest Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Job Fair](#) - Friday, April 23, 2010

[MacDill Air Force Base Job Fair](#) - Sunday, April 25, 2010

[Spring Education Job Fair](#) - Monday, April 26, 2010

[Physical Therapy Job Fair](#) - Monday, April 26, 2010

The 2007 Solution

Government spending is out of control. The latest evidence is the fact that the taxes our federal government collects currently only cover what is spent on entitlement programs, including Social Security and Medicare. Every other function of government is paid for with borrowed money.

Last Wednesday, I introduced a resolution that will create a mechanism Congress can use to cap annual federal spending at \$2.7 trillion - the same level the federal government spent in 2007. By living within those means, lawmakers would be forced to set spending priorities. By controlling spending, the budget would be balanced by 2013, and by 2020 we could cut our national debt in half.



American families are cutting their budgets and the Federal government should do the same. Reducing government spending to 2007 levels will take restraint and better oversight, but it is the right thing to do and would pave the way toward prosperity for future generations.

Read more about my [2007 Solution proposal here](#)

Space Program Requires Clear Vision

"Without the skill and experience that actual spacecraft operation provides, the USA is far too likely to be on a long downhill slide to mediocrity," - From an open letter to President Obama signed by Astronauts Neil Armstrong, James Lovell, and Eugene Cernan.

President Obama's visit to Florida last Thursday was a missed opportunity to restore NASA's vision for manned space flight and exploration. I had hoped the president would articulate what our human space flight program will be going forward. Instead, the message is that the U.S. will still rely on the Russians for access to space, our crew capsule will become a lifeboat, and there is no definitive timetable or destination for future missions.

We cannot have half efforts that create the perception of advancement. Promises to make decisions in the future will only hurt the space program. A rocket without a destination will be a giant leap backward for America's space leadership.



We need a complete change of course to advance manned space flight and space exploration. Congress will weigh in on this question in the coming weeks. I have authored a bill, S.3180, to preserve the Constellation program which is comprised of the Ares I rocket, the Orion crew vehicle, the Ares V heavy-lift rocket and the Altair lunar lander. Supporters of my legislation include Senators Thad Cochran (R-MS), Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), Jeff Sessions (R-AL), Richard Shelby (R-AL), Roger Wicker (R-MS), and Bob Bennett (R-UT). We need the Constellation program, or a Constellation-like program to keep America's leadership in space.

Too Big to Fail?

This week, the U.S. Senate turns its attention to financial regulatory reform. Congress's response to the financial meltdown of 2008 is a bundle of new regulations - some of which apply common sense fixes, but other provisions threaten to expand the role of government, encourage risky behavior by Wall Street firms, and put taxpayers on the hook for expensive and endless bailouts.

The U.S. economy must be protected from the fallout of risky financial transactions and taxpayers should not have to pay the price when financial traders create and invest in questionable and highly unstable financial products.

Regulatory reform must address the substantial role ratings agencies played in facilitating the financial crisis, we must protect against future collapses in the home mortgage market by requiring lenders to keep a mortgage if the owner's equity stake is less than ten percent, and those who issue securities should be required to retain a substantial stake in the instruments they market.

I am hopeful this debate will focus on ensuring investors have more "skin in the game." Whether it is a complex financial instrument or a home mortgage, those

requirement will bring about better investment decisions and elements of caution and stability to Wall Street.

Casework Corner

One of my primary goals is to make sure Floridians are well served by Federal agencies. From time to time, I will share accounts of how our office has helped a Floridian.

Recently our office received a call from a veteran facing financial hardship while he waited for the Veterans' Administration to pay his Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. A caseworker from our office contacted the Veterans' Affairs Educational Office regarding this matter. Upon reviewing the veteran's paperwork at our request, the VA informed that his claim had been processed and that he would receive over \$5,000 dollars for his education.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill provides financial support for education and housing to individuals with at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001, or for individuals discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days.

If you are experiencing a problem with a federal agency, please contact our Orlando Regional Office by calling (407) 254-2573 to speak with a member of the Casework Department. The toll-free number for Florida residents is (866) 630-7106. To find out more about how my office can help you, go to <http://lemieux.senate.gov> or stop by one of our scheduled Community Office Hours in your area.

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